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(84) Designated Contracting States: AT BE CH DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LU MC NL PT SE	(72) Inventors: • Yamaguchi, Hiroshi Hirakata-shi, Osaka, 573 (JP) • Ikeda, Kenichi Minou-shi, Osaka, 562 (JP) • Mitani, Katsunaki Ibaraki-shi, Osaka, 567 (JP) (74) Representative: Grünecker, Kinleider, Stöckmair & Schwannhüser Anwaltskanzlei Maximiliansstrasse 58 80538 München (DE)
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(54) Rear projection screen, its manufacturing method, and video display monitor thereof
(57) A rear projection screen and its manufacturing method, and video display monitor thereof for preventing mold by achieving sufficiently large ratio of a pixel pitch on the screen to a lenticular lens pitch. A lenticular lens sheet with the thickness of 0.3 mm or below has a lenticular lens array with a lens pitch P_L of 0.2 mm or below

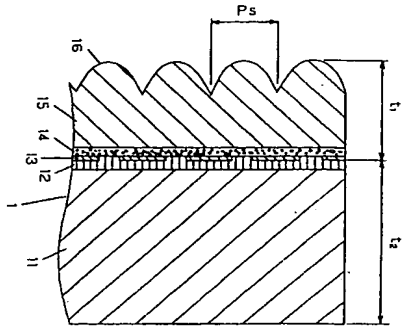


FIG. 1A

Description
FIELD OF THE INVENTION
The present invention relates to the field of rear projection screens used for rear projection video display monitors, their manufacturing methods, and rear projection video display monitors thereof.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Market demand for development of light and small rear projection video display monitors for displaying images on a large screen is continuing to increase. An example of how the rear projection screen is used in rear projection video display monitors is explained with reference to Fig. 6.

A projection lens 202 behind a rear projection screen 203 magnifies and projects an image of a CRT 201, and creates an image on the rear projection screen 203. Viewers can look at the image from the front of the screen. When the image is seen from a diagonal direction relative to the right front of the screen, the luminance of the image generally falls with increasing angle. This change in luminance is called the visual field characteristic. The rear projection screen 203 comprises a resin lens sheet 204 and a lenticular lens sheet 205. The resin lens sheet 204 converts the incident projection beam from the projection lens 202 to the rear projection screen 203 into summary parallel rays. The lenticular lens sheet 205 diffuses the incident projection beam converted to parallel rays by the resin lens sheet 204. The visual field characteristic of the screen is determined by how the incident projection beam is diffused.

A semi-cylindrical lenticular lens array, whose lenses are aligned with their longer side in the vertical direction, is formed on the rear side of the lenticular lens sheet 205. The diffusing material is dispersed inside the lenticular lens sheet 205.

The horizontal viewing angle is mainly determined by refraction of the lenticular lenses, which is relatively broad. Diffusion of the beam by the diffusing material also contributes to widening the viewing angle. The vertical viewing angle is determined only by the diffusion effect of the diffusing material, which is relatively narrow. The viewing angle of the screen is determined according to the viewing environment, and luminance in the viewing area is increased by the effective use of the projection beam.

The wider visual field characteristic of video display monitors is better for watching the screen, however, luminance as seen from the right front falls as the visual field characteristic is widened. Therefore, the optical visual field characteristic is determined by effectively distributing the beam in the desired necessary directions.

The screen of a video display monitor is generally seen from a variety of horizontal directions, in the vertical direction, however, the screen is seen from a narrower range of angles because audiences are more likely to watch the screen sitting or standing up. Therefore, vertical visual field characteristics may not desirably be as wide. The visual field characteristic of the rear projection screen is designed to satisfy usage purposes. Accordingly, the beam diffusing characteristic of the rear projection screen preferably requires anisotropic light diffusion characteristics, which show broader diffusion in the horizontal direction and narrower diffusion in the vertical direction.

The lenticular lens sheet 205 has anisotropic light diffusion characteristics. Specifically, the light diffusion characteristic shows a higher value in the horizontal direction due to the effect of the lenticular lenses whose longer side is aligned in the vertical direction, and a relatively smaller value in the vertical direction because the light is vertically diffused only by the effect of light-diffusing material dispersed inside.

The effect of the lenticular lenses of the lenticular lens sheet 205 is explained with reference to Fig. 7. It should be noted that the light diffusing material generally dispersed in the lens is not illustrated here. Fig. 7 therefore shows light diffusion in the horizontal direction only by refraction of the lenticular lenses.

The solid line in Fig. 7 indicates the beam track of the main beam passing through the pupil center of the projection lens 202. A broken line indicates the beam passing the periphery of the projection lens 202.

As shown in Fig. 7, the lenticular lenses widely diffuse (to wide angle) the incident beam which has entered the lenticular lens with sharp directivity (almost parallel) so that the image can be watched over a broader visual field.

The thickness of the lenticular lens sheet 205 is almost equivalent to the focal length of the lenticular lens. The projection beam passes through a specified area on the lenticular lens sheet 205, but does not pass through other areas. Using the characteristic whereby the beam does not pass through a certain area (beam non-transmitting area), black stripes 206, made of light-absorbing material, are generally formed on the beam non-transmitting area in the beam exiting plane of the lenticular lens sheet 206.

By forming the black stripes 206 on the lenticular lens sheet 205, reflection of external light can be reduced without loss in the projection beam, thereby greatly improving image contrast.

However, as is apparent from the above explanation, the thickness of the lenticular lens sheet 205 is ideally almost equivalent to the focal length of the lenticular lens element. To achieve an appropriate horizontal viewing angle (e.g. 30° to 45° which is up to the angle when luminance is reduced by half), the thickness will be 1.2 to 1.5 times that of the lenticular lens pitch.

Popular screen sizes for these types of display monitors such as rear projection televisions are 35" to 70", and the lenticular lens pitch is 0.5 to 1.0 mm.

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A smaller lenticular lens pitch is better for preventing deterioration in the resolving power of the rear projection screen. However, the abovementioned lenticular lens pitch of 0.5 to 1.0 mm satisfies the display quality in particular use for rear projection video display monitors having a CRT as an image source.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, black stripes may require to be formed in a location which maintains the right positional relation with the lenticular lenses. If the black stripes are shifted, the beam which is supposed to pass through is absorbed, resulting in reduction of light efficiency.

A general method for forming the black stripes is to make a concave and convex section on the emitting face corresponding to the incident plane of the lenticular lens at the same time when molding the lenticular lens sheet, and use the concave and convex section for the black stripes. This method assures the positional accuracy of the commonly used lenticular lens pitches of 0.5 mm to 1.0 mm. Due to limits in machining accuracy, however, the relative positional error in the accuracy of matching the mold for forming the shape of lenticular lens and the mold for forming the concave and convex increases if the lenticular lens pitch is further narrowed. It is difficult to make a finer lenticular lens pitch with this method.

Japanese Laid-open Patent HE-254756 discloses a method of accurately forming the black stripes without using molds. The prior art discloses a method for forming the convex and concave shapes or a mask by exposing light-sensitive resin selectively using the light condensing function of the lenticular lens.

Since rear projection video display monitors having a liquid crystal panel as a video source have recently been developed, demands for finer lenticular lens pitch have increased. Rear projection video display monitors having a liquid crystal panel as a video source may cause moiré due to pixel alignment of liquid crystal and lens alignment of the lenticular lens. Moiré has not occurred in rear projection video display monitors having a CRT as an image source because the periodicity of scanning lines of the CRT and the periodicity of the lenticular lens spatially cross at right angles.

Moiré caused by the pixel alignment of liquid crystals and the lens alignment of the lenticular lens is related to the pitch ratio $R_p = P_g/P_{lc}$, where P_g is the pixel pitch of liquid crystal and P_{lc} is the lenticular lens pitch of the lenticular lens sheet 205. To make moiré inconspicuous by minimizing the moiré pitch, the pitch ratio R_p should ideally be close to a multiple of a half integer. The larger the pitch ratio R_p , the more the moiré intensity is reduced.

Allowance for the pitch ratio R_p for practical use can be generalized because it is also related to the amount of diffusing material mixed in. In our examination, the pitch ratio R_p below 5 preferably requires optimization to a multiple of a half integer as mentioned above, preferably around 4.5 with a minimum of 2.5. When the R_p is above 5.5, moiré intensity is very low,

and may not require optimization to a multiple of a half integer.

For example, if an image of popular VGA (Video Graphics Array) specification (640 horizontal pixels and 480 vertical pixels) is displayed on the 40 inch screen of a rear projection video display monitor with a liquid crystal video source, the pixel pitch P_g on the rear projection screen is about 1.3 mm. Accordingly, the maximum applicable lenticular pitch P_{lc} is $1/2.5$ of the pixel pitch, which is about 0.5 mm. Existing lenticular lens sheets therefore satisfy the 0.5 mm lenticular pitch P_{lc} .

To ensure that a lenticular lens sheet with black stripes provides a specified viewing angle, the thickness of the lenticular lens sheet is ideally within 1.5 times the lenticular pitch, which in this case is below 0.75 mm. A lenticular lens sheet with a thickness below 0.75 mm causes a new problem in that it is very easily bent, making it difficult to hold in position.

In addition, a lenticular lens sheet of 0.5 mm pitch is applicable only for the abovementioned number of pixels and screen size. If the screen size differs slightly, even though the number of pixels is the same, a high degree of moiré appears, making the display monitor unacceptable for use.

The prior art has diffusing material inside the lenticular lens sheet. In this case, the projection beam is diffused by the diffusion effect of the diffusing material before reaching the black stripes, thus causing loss in the beam. Japanese Laid-open Patent No. HE-254756 discloses a method for forming the black stripes by making convex and concave sections or a mask by exposing light-sensitive resin selectively using the light condensing function of the lenticular lens.

With this method, if diffusing material is dispersed inside the lenticular lens sheet, the irradiated beam diffuses by the diffusion effect of the diffusing material, and causes slight changes or non-uniformly in exposure conditions such as the intensity of irradiation and exposure time. Consequently, it is difficult to form precise black stripes in this way due to the occurrence of changes and non-uniformity during their formation.

To avoid these problems, as shown in Fig. 5B, one way is to make the lenticular lens sheet only with transparent material and provide a diffuser 108 on the viewing face of the lenticular lens sheet.

However, this method cannot sufficiently reduce diffuse reflection of external light, resulting in lower image contrast.

The basic concept is explained with reference to flat boards in Figs. 5A and 5B.

Fig. 5A shows a transparent board with black stripes having an optical diffusion layer inside. Fig. 5B illustrates a transparent board with black stripes and a diffuser at its front. A diffuser with black stripes 107 is a transparent diffuser which comprises an optical diffusion layer 110 at its center and black stripes on its viewing face. A diffuser 108 is a transparent diffuser which comprises an optical diffusion layer 110 at its center, A

transparent board with black stripes 109 has black stripes 106 on a transparent board. The width of the black stripes 106 is half the periodicity of the black stripes 106.

In the above example, the transparent material shows a refractive index of 1.5 and reflectance of 4%, regardless of incident angle for convenience, and no optical absorption. Both sides of the transparent material are mirror finished. The black stripes also have reflectance of 4%, and the rest is absorbed, giving zero transmittance. Therefore, a black stripe face 107a and 109a where black stripes are formed over 50% of its area has 4% reflectance, 48% transmittance, and 48% absorption. Other faces without black stripes have 4% reflectance, 96% transmittance, and 0% absorption.

Based on the above assumption, the diffuse reflection component in two examples in Figs. 5A and 5B is discussed below. Under examination, the intensity of incident beam is considered as 1, and any component which reflects multiple times is ignored because the amount is very small.

In Fig. 5A, it is assumed that external light with intensity of 1 enters the black stripe face 107a at the screen viewing side of the diffuser with black stripes 107. Of the incident light, 4% is reflected, 48% is absorbed, and 48% is transmitted and diffused by the optical diffusion layer 110. Of the light 48% which has been diffused, 4% is reflected by a face 107b. Out of that 4%, 48% is again transmitted through the black stripe face 107a and returns to the viewing direction. Component which returns to the viewing direction in this case is as follows:

1) The component which transmits through the black stripe face 107a, reflects on the face 107b, and transmits through the face 107a again is

$$0.04 \times (0.48)^2 = 0.009.$$

This is just 0.9% of incident external light.

In the case of Fig. 5B, 4% of the external light which enters from a face 108a at the screen viewing side of the diffuser 108 is reflected and 96% is transmitted through the face 108a and diffused by the optical diffusion layer 110. Of that 96%, which has been diffused by the optical diffusion layer 110, the component which returns to the viewing direction is as follows:

1) The component reflected on a face 108b and transmitted through the face 108a is

$$0.04 \times 0.96 = 0.038.$$

2) The component transmitted through the face 108b, reflected on a face 109a, and transmitted through the face 108b and the face 108a is

$$0.04 \times (0.96)^3 = 0.035.$$

3) The component transmitted through the faces 108b and 109a, reflected on a face 109b, and transmitted through the faces 109a, 108b, and 108a is

$$0.04 \times (0.96)^3 \times (0.48)^2 = 0.008.$$

In total,

$$0.96 \times (0.038 + 0.035 + 0.008) = 0.078.$$

This proves that the example in Fig. 5B reflects about 9 times more than the example in Fig. 5A. About 8% of the external light is reflected to the screen viewing side as diffusion light, resulting in deterioration of image contrast.

Consequently, the method which provides the diffuser in front of the lenticular lens sheet lowers image contrast.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A rear projection screen comprises a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face at the other side, and a beam transmitting part having a flat face on both sides. An optical absorption layer, optical diffusion layer, and optically bonded layer are formed between the flat face of the lenticular lens sheet and one face of the beam transmitting part.

In the rear projection screen of the present invention and its manufacturing method, the screen comprises a thin lenticular lens sheet and a thick beam transmitting part. The optical absorption layer and optical diffusion layer are formed between the lenticular lens sheet and the beam transmitting part, and they are optically bonded so as to prevent loss of beam at an interface. With the above integrated configuration, the present invention improves mechanical rigidity, and at the same time prevents the loss of beam and the occurrence of flare by reflection on a bonded face.

The rear projection video display monitor of the present invention comprises a liquid crystal panel of the present invention and satisfies demands for finer lenticular lens pitch.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1A is a horizontal section view of a rear projection screen in accordance with a first exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 1B illustrates a rear projection video display monitor in accordance with the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a horizontal section view of a rear projection screen in accordance with a second exemplary embodiment.

iment of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a section view of a lenticular lens sheet of a rear projection screen in accordance with a third exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 4A-D illustrate an exemplary manufacturing process for a rear projection screen in accordance with a fourth exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Figs. 5A-B are sectional views of flat boards for explaining diffuse reflection component in external light in accordance with the prior art.

Fig. 6 is a basic structure of a projection video display monitor in accordance with the prior art.

Fig. 7 is a section view of a lenticular lens sheet for explaining the effect of the lenticular lens sheet in accordance with the prior art.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

First exemplary embodiment

Fig. 1A is a horizontal section view of a rear projection screen 1. In a first exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a lenticular lens sheet 15 and a beam transmitting part 11 are adhered using a transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 12. The rear projection screen comprises a resin lens sheet and a lenticular lens sheet as explained using Fig. 6. However, the resin lens sheet is excluded from the rear projection screen in the following explanation.

In a projection video display monitor, an image is projected from the lenticular lens sheet 15, and viewers watch the image from the beam transmitting part 11.

A lenticular lens array 16 consisting of lenticular lenses is formed on one side of the lenticular lens sheet 15. Lenticular lenses have a semi-cylindrical shape, and a large number of them are aligned in array. The longer side of the semi-cylindrical lenses are aligned vertically for use.

An optical diffusion layer 14 is formed over the entire face of the other side of the lenticular lens sheet 15. Diffusing material which diffuses light isotropically is dispersed in the optical diffusion layer 14.

An optical absorption layer 13 is formed on the optical diffusion layer 14. Since the optical absorption layer 13 is formed on a beam non-transmitting area created as a result of the refraction effect of the lenticular lens sheet 15, it does not cause any loss in the projection beam. The optical absorption layer 13 is black and therefore called black stripes.

The lenticular lens array 16, as already explained using Fig. 7, refracts and diffuses the incident beam which enters horizontally. The rear projection screen of the present invention employs the lenticular lenses with pitch P of 0.2 mm or below so as to satisfy requirements for reducing moiré as previously described. The local length of the lenticular lens is 1.2 to 1.5 times the pitch

P s. This enables the rear projection screen of the present invention to assure an appropriate horizontal viewing field on the video display screen.

The lenticular lens array 16 diffuses the beam over a broader area by refracting the incident beam horizontally and diffusing it. The optical diffusion layer 14 further diffuses the beam in other directions than the diffusing directions of the lenticular lens to prevent a sharp drop in luminance at some viewing angles. The optical diffusion layer 14 also diffuses the beam in the vertical direction, which the lenticular lens array 16 does not reflect, thereby giving a relatively narrow viewing field in the vertical direction.

The thickness t_1 of the lenticular lens sheet 15 is set equivalent to the aforementioned local length. This makes the projection beam converge in a limited area (face) on the other face, and exits from that limited area (face).

In other words, the projection beam passes the other face through the limited area (face), and the beam does not pass through other area (face). The area which the beam does not pass through is called a beam non-transmitting area, and the optical absorption layer 13 is provided thereon. The optical absorption layer 13 has black stripes for preventing a loss in the projection beam. With provision of this optical absorption layer 13, reflection of external light can be reduced without loss in the projection beam, thereby improving the contrast of video image.

The thickness t_1 of the lenticular lens sheet 15 as configured above is 1.2 to 1.5 times that of the lenticular lens pitch P = 0.20 mm, as explained above, which is 0.3 mm at the maximum. Consequently, the lenticular lens sheet 15 is too thin to be independently mounted as a rear projection screen on projection video display monitors.

The mechanical strength of the lenticular lens sheet 15 can be improved by adhering it to the thick beam transmitting part 11. However, adhesion of the lenticular lens sheet 15 and the beam transmitting part 11 may be required to satisfy optical bonding conditions to prevent flare and loss of beam due to reflection at the interface. The lenticular lens sheet 15 with a thickness t_1 of 0.3 mm or less is adhered to the beam transmitting part 11 with a thickness t_2 of between 1 mm and 5 mm using the transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 12 which satisfies conditions for optically bonding two materials without causing reflections at the interface. For example, if the beam transmitting part 11 and the lenticular lens sheet 15 are made of acrylic resin, the light diffusion layer 14 and the light absorption layer 13 are made of resin mainly composed of acrylic resin, and an acrylic transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive is used as the transparent adhesive 12, the refractive index of all parts are nearly equivalent. Therefore, the rear projection screen using the above materials are optically bonded, and loss of beam and flare due to reflection do not occur at the interface. Thus, optical bonding conditions can be

fulfilled by selecting materials with matching refractive indices.

Since the screen is mechanically strengthened, the present invention can be easily and independently mounted as a rear projection screen on projection video display monitors.

If the thickness t_2 of the beam transmitting part 11 is 1 mm or less, its strength is insufficient. If it is over 5 mm, it is too heavy. In both cases, there will be difficulty in handling the beam transmitting part 11.

Figure 1B illustrates a video display monitor in accordance with the present invention. A video source 50, such as a liquid crystal panel is shown. An image of liquid crystal panel 50 illuminated by a lamp 51 is magnified and projected through a projection lens 52, and converted into parallel rays through a Fresnel lens sheet 54 and creates an image on the rear projection screen 55.

Second exemplary embodiment

Fig. 2 is a horizontal section view in a second exemplary embodiment of a rear projection screen of the present invention. Black stripes, which is an optical absorption layer 23, are provided on an area where beam does not pass through in a beam exiting plane of a lenticular lens sheet 25; that is a beam non-transmitting area.

An optical diffusion layer 24 with a diffusing material dispersed therein for diffusing beam isotropically, is formed over the entire face of one side of a beam transmitting part 21.

The optical absorption layer 23 consisting of the black stripes and the optical diffusion layer 24 containing diffusing material are optically bonded with a transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 so as to prevent reflection at the interface, and therefore the lenticular lens sheet 25 and the beam transmitting part 21 are integrated. The optical bonding material is also optically bonded to the diffusion layer. Thus, both the absorption layers 23 and the portions of adhesive 22 between absorption layers 23 are optically bonded to the diffusion layer.

In the above configuration, a lenticular lens array 26 refracts and diffuses incident beam entering horizontally. Since the optical absorption layer 23 is formed on the beam non-transmitting area which is created as a result of refraction effect by the lenticular lens sheet 25, loss in the projection beam can be prevented and reflection of external light can be suppressed. Since the diffusing material for diffusing the beam isotropically is dispersed in the optical diffusion layer 24, projection beam is scattered.

External light diffused by the optical diffusion layer 24 which reaches the black stripes is 100% absorbed without being reflected on black stripe sections. Component which reaches opening sections is 100% passed through. This reduces diffuse reflection component of external light.

In other preferred mode, the optical diffusion layer

24 and the beam transmitting part 21 may preferably be integrated by double-layer extrusion, and the lenticular lens sheet 25 comprising the optical absorption layer 23 is optically bonded using the transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 22.

In the second exemplary embodiment, the optical absorption layer 23 and the optical diffusion layer 24 are bonded with a pressure-sensitive adhesive. The same effect can be expected with the use of a transparent adhesive.

The rear projection screen in the first and second exemplary embodiments of the present invention enables to reduce the pitch P s of the lenticular lens to 0.2 mm or below. Since a pixel pitch P of rear projection video display monitors with the screen size above 35" employing a VGA liquid crystal panel is about 1.3 mm, the pitch ratio P/P_s is 5.5 times or above. Consequently, moiré disturbance can be reduced to within allowance of practical use. This solves the first problem of the prior art.

Secondly, mechanical strength of the lenticular lens sheet with the thickness of 0.3 mm or below having black stripes on its focal face and the lenticular lens pitch P s of 0.2 mm or below can be increased without losing optical performance such as loss in beam and flare due to reflection by optically bonding the black stripe face of the lenticular lens sheet to the beam transmitting part with the thickness of 1 mm or above.

Thirdly, the rear projection screen with better effect for reducing reflection of external light can be provided without reducing optical performance such as loss in beam and flare due to reflection and optical attenuation by optically bonding the lenticular lens sheet and the beam transmitting part.

The optical diffusion layer 24 is formed over the entire face of one side of the optical transmitting part 21 in the exemplary embodiment. In other preferred mode, a diffusing material is dispersed in the entire lens sheet without forming the optical diffusion layer 24.

An optical absorbing material can also be dispersed in the beam transmitting part 21. In this case, transmittance may reduce but the image contrast will improve because reduction in reflection of external light by the beam transmitting part 21 exceeds the loss of projection beam.

Further values can be added to the rear projection screen of the present invention by applying well-known processing such as reflection prevention, anti-static treatment, and surface hardening to the surface of the beam transmitting part 21.

With the use of the rear projection screen as configured above, rear projection video display monitors having a liquid crystal panel as a video source can improve the contrast characteristic without causing deterioration of picture quality by more in a range of screen sizes without being limited to a certain size. In addition the present invention offers an easy-to-handle rear projection screen. Thus, this embodiment can also be used

in the rear projection video display monitor shown in Fig. 1B. The pitch ratio Pg/Ps is 5.5 times or above in these ent embodiments. Consequently, moire disturbance can be reduced to within allowances of practical use. The liquid crystal panel 50 can be replaced by video display device such as CRT, plasma display as in Fig. 6.

Third exemplary embodiment

Fig. 3 is a lenticular lens sheet in a third exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

Black stripes formed on a flat face of a lenticular lens sheet 35 are used as an optical absorption layer 33. On top of the optical absorption layer 33, an optical diffusion layer 34 with a diffusing material dispersed therein for diffusing beam isotropically is directly formed by means such as printing and spraying. The surface of the optical diffusion layer 34 is smoothed by printing multiple times or by optimizing the viscosity of spraying material.

With this configuration as shown in Fig. 3, a smooth face of the lenticular lens sheet 35 comprising the optical diffusion layer 34 and the optical absorption layer 33 is optically bonded to a smooth face of a beam transmitting part. The flat contact faces thus facilitate creation of an optically bonded layer without generating bubbles in a transparent adhesive.

This configuration may also be used in a video display monitor.

Fourth exemplary embodiment

Figs. 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D illustrate an example of how a lenticular lens sheet of the rear projection screen of the present invention is manufactured.

First, a mold which is engraved to a reverse shape of a lenticular lens array is filled with uncured acrylic ultraviolet curing resin. The acrylic ultraviolet curing resin in the mold is covered with a polyester film for preventing generation of bubbles on the surface, and the ultraviolet ray is irradiated over the polyester film to cure ultraviolet curing resin to create a film of a lenticular lens sheet 25 as shown in Fig. 4A. The thickness of the polyester film is determined in a way to make the total thickness of the lenticular lens and the polyester film nearly the same as the local length of the lenticular lens.

A lift-off method is employed for forming an optical absorption layer 23 on a film of the lenticular lens sheet 25.

After applying an ultraviolet curing resin on a flat face of the film of the lenticular lens sheet 25, ultraviolet ray parallel to an optical axis of the lenticular lens is irradiated from the side of the lenticular lens. By irradiating ultraviolet ray, the ultraviolet curing resin at a part where beam passes through when it is used as a screen is cured. Uncured ultraviolet curing resin at a part where the beam does not pass through, which becomes a beam non-transmitting area, is removed in a developing

process. Accordingly, the lenticular lens sheet having stripes of the ultraviolet curing resin on the beam transmitting area is formed.

Secondly, a black ink is printed or sprayed on the entire flat face, and dried. Using a chemical which dissolves the ultraviolet ray curing resin but does not dissolve the black ink, the black ink applied to the beam transmitting area is removed together with the ultraviolet curing resin which was on the beam transmitting area.

Consequently, the black ink remains only on the beam non-transmitting area, which forms black stripes as shown in Fig. 4B. Thus, a film of lenticular lens sheet having an optical absorption layer 23 is made.

On the other hand, a beam transmitting part 21 having an optical diffusion layer 24 is made by the double layer extrusion as shown in Fig. 4C. Materials and their characteristics are explained below. PMMA (acrylic resin) is used as a material for the beam transmitting part 21, which becomes a base board. The optical dispersion layer 24 consists of PMMA as dispersion medium, and MS (polymer of acryl and styrene) beads are spread thereto. Beam diffuses by refraction of beam at the beads interface caused by the difference in refractive index of PMMA and that of MS of which beads are made.

Target diffusion characteristics can be achieved by adjusting refractive index of MS beads, beads diameter, and the thickness of a diffusion layer. Refraction index of PMMA, the diffusion medium, is 1.49, whereas that of MS, the beads material, is 1.52 to 1.55. If the beads particle diameter is set between 3 μ m and 20 μ m and diffusion concentration is set to 5 to 20% in volume concentration, the thickness of the optical diffusion layer will be about 100 μ m for realizing required vertical viewing field characteristic on the screen.

Next, how the beam transmitting part 21 (Fig. 4C) having the optical diffusion layer 24, which is made by the double-layer extrusion, and a film of the lenticular lens sheet (Fig. 4B) having the black stripes 23 are optically bonded using a transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 is explained with reference to Fig. 4D.

Required thickness of the beam transmitting part 21 after bonding depends on the screen size. However, it is preferably set to a range of 1 mm to 5 mm for assuring sufficient mechanical strength as a screen after bonding and avoiding too heavy screen which causes difficulty in handling. The lenticular lens sheet with black stripes and the beam transmitting part 21 are bonded between the face of black stripes and the face of light diffusion layer using the transparent acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 (refractive index, 1.49).

As explained above, each component of the screen, that is, the lenticular lens sheet 25, diffusion medium of the optical diffusion layer 24, and the beam transmitting part 21 are made of or mainly containing acrylic resin, and therefore refractive index is about the same as that of the transparent acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 which is used for bonding each component. Thus, optical bonding conditions are satisfied and beam does

not reflect at the interface.

With the use of above manufacturing method, the optical diffusion layer does not disturb formation of black stripes. Thus, the black stripes can also be formed accurately in an inexpensive way. In addition, optical bonding of the optical diffusion layer and the black stripes eliminate reflection at the interface, and thereby avoiding reduction of image contrast by reflection. In addition, the black stripes absorb beam so as to realize high image contrast.

Furthermore, the lenticular lens sheet is mechanically strengthened by optically bonding it to a relatively thick base board. Thus, the rear projection screen of the present invention facilitates mounting of a film of the lenticular lens sheet onto projection video display monitors, which was then difficult to mount independently.

In the above manufacturing method, the optical diffusion layer 24 and the beam transmitting part 21 are manufactured by the double-layer extrusion. This can also be realized by optically bonding between a film of the optical diffusion layer, a film of the lenticular lens sheet with black stripes, and the beam transmitting part 21 which is a transparent layer, using the transparent acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 (refractive index 1.49).

In other preferred mode, the acrylic transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive 22 is applied to optically bond a film of the optical diffusion layer and a film of the lenticular lens sheet without black stripes. Black stripes are formed thereon using the above method. The face with black stripes and the beam transmitting part 21 are then optically bonded using the transparent pressure-sensitive material 22.

Accordingly, the present invention prevents occurrence of deterioration in video images due to moiré although a liquid crystal panel is used as a video source in the rear projection video display monitor by achieving the lenticular lens array pitch of 0.2 mm or below. In addition, the present invention facilitates handling of the screen without degrading optical characteristics by optically bonding the lenticular lens sheet to the beam transmitting part with the thickness of 1 mm to 5 mm.

It will also be appreciated that the rear projection screen and its manufacturing method of the present invention can be realized in other ways. The exemplary embodiments described herein are therefore illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention being indicated by the appended claims and all modifications which come within the true spirit of the claims are intended to be embraced therein.

Claims

1. A rear projection screen comprising:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other

side,
a beam transmitting part having flat faces on both sides;

an optical absorption layer; an optical diffusion layer; and an optically bonded layer provided between the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet and one face of said beam transmitting part.

2. A rear projection screen comprising:

a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;

an optical absorption layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;

an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer;

an optical diffusion layer adjacent to said optically bonded layer; and
a beam transmitting part adjacent to said optical diffusion layer having flat faces on both sides;

whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical diffusion layer are optically bonded.

3. A rear projection screen comprising:

a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;

an optical diffusion layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;

an optical absorption layer adjacent to said optical diffusion layer;

an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer; and
a beam transmitting part adjacent to said optically bonded layer having flat faces on both sides;

whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical transmitting part are optically bonded.

4. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 2, whereas the thickness of said lenticular lens sheet is almost equivalent to the local length of a lens of said lenticular lens array, and said lenticular lens sheet and said beam transmitting part are optically bonded with a transparent adhesive between the following faces:

the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet where said optical absorption layer is formed on a beam non-transmitting area and
a face of said optical diffusion layer formed on a side of said beam transmitting part.

5. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 4, wherein a lens pitch of said lenticular lens array is 0.2 mm at the maximum.
6. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 4, wherein the thickness of said beam transmitting part is between 1 mm and 5 mm.
7. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 4, wherein a diffusing material is dispersed in said optical diffusion layer for diffusing beam isotropically.
8. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 4, wherein:
- 15 a lens pitch of said lenticular lens array is 0.2 mm at the maximum;
the thickness of said beam transmitting part is between 1 mm and 5 mm;
a diffusing material is dispersed in said optical diffusion layer for diffusing beam isotropically.
9. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 3, wherein said lenticular lens sheet, having the thickness almost equivalent to the focal length of the lens of said lenticular lens array, and said beam transmitting part are optically bonded using a transparent adhesive between:
- 20 a face of said optical absorption layer on a beam non-transmitting area of the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet and
a face of said beam transmitting part.
10. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 9, wherein a lens pitch of said lenticular lens array is 0.2 mm at the maximum.
11. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 9, wherein the thickness of said beam transmitting part is between 1 mm and 5 mm.
12. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 9, wherein a diffusing material is dispersed in said optical diffusion layer for diffusing beam isotropically.
13. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 9, wherein:
- 25 a lens pitch of said lenticular lens array is 0.2 mm at the maximum;
the thickness of said beam transmitting part is between 1 mm and 5 mm;
a diffusing material is dispersed in said optical diffusion layer for diffusing beam isotropically.
14. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen, comprising the steps of:
- 30 forming a lenticular lens sheet by curing an ultraviolet curing resin, said lenticular lens sheet has a lenticular lens on one face and a flat face at the other side, and the thickness of said lenticular lens sheet is almost equivalent to the focal length of said lenticular lens;
forming an optical absorption layer on a beam non-transmitting area of the flat face of said transparent lenticular lens sheet by the lift-off method using an ultraviolet curing resin; and
bonding a face of the optical absorption layer of said lenticular lens sheet and a face of said beam transmitting part using a transparent adhesive.
15. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen as defined in Claim 14, wherein said transparent adhesive is a transparent acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive.
16. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen as defined in Claim 14, wherein said beam transmitting part having the optical diffusion layer is formed by double-layer extrusion.
17. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen, comprising the steps of:
- 35 forming a lenticular lens sheet by curing an ultraviolet curing resin, said lenticular lens sheet has a lenticular lens on one face and a flat face at the other side, and the thickness of said lenticular lens sheet is almost equivalent to the focal length of said lenticular lens;
forming an optical diffusion layer on the flat face of said transparent lenticular lens sheet, a diffusing material is dispersed in said optical diffusion layer for diffusing beam isotropically;
forming an optical absorption layer at a beam non-transmitting area on top of said optical diffusion layer by the lift-off method using an ultraviolet curing resin; and
bonding a face of the optical absorption layer of said lenticular lens sheet and a face of said beam transmitting part using a transparent adhesive.
18. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen according to claim 17, wherein said transparent adhesive is a transparent acrylic pressure-sensitive adhesive.
19. A method for manufacturing a rear projection screen as defined in Claim 17, wherein said beam transmitting part having the optical diffusion layer is formed by the double-layer extrusion.
20. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 1,
- 40 wherein said lenticular lens array, beam transmitting part, optical absorption layer, optical diffusion layer, and optically bonded layer are made of materials which have nearly the same refraction indices.
21. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 2, wherein said lenticular lens array, beam transmitting part, optical absorption layer, optical diffusion layer, and optically bonded layer are made of materials which have nearly the same refraction indices.
22. A rear projection screen as defined in Claim 3, wherein said lenticular lens array, beam transmitting part, optical absorption layer, optical diffusion layer, and optically bonded layer are made of materials which have nearly the same refraction indices.
23. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 45 a video display device, and
a rear projection screen comprising:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
a beam transmitting part having flat faces on both sides;
an optical absorption layer, an optical diffusion layer, and an optically bonded layer provided between the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet and one face of said beam transmitting part.
24. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 50 a video display device, and
a rear projection screen comprising:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
an optical absorption layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;
an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer;
an optical diffusion layer adjacent to said optically bonded layer, and
a beam transmitting part adjacent to said optical diffusion layer having flat faces on both sides;
whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical diffusion layer are optically bonded.
25. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 55 a video display device, and
a rear projection screen comprising:
a liquid crystal panel as a video source, and a rear projection screen comprising in the following order:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
an optical absorption layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;
an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer;
an optical diffusion layer adjacent to said optically bonded layer, and
a beam transmitting part adjacent to said optical diffusion layer having flat faces on both sides;
whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical diffusion layer are optically bonded.
26. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 60 a liquid crystal panel as a video source, and a rear projection screen comprising:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
a beam transmitting part having flat faces on both sides;
an optical absorption layer, an optical diffusion layer, and an optically bonded layer provided between the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet and one face of said beam transmitting part.
27. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 65 a liquid crystal panel as a video source, and a rear projection screen comprising in the following order:
a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
an optical absorption layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;
an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer;
an optical diffusion layer adjacent to said optically bonded layer, and
a beam transmitting part adjacent to said optical diffusion layer having flat faces on both sides;
whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical diffusion layer are optically bonded.
28. A rear projection video display monitor, comprising:
- 70 a liquid crystal panel as a video source, and a rear projection screen comprising in the following order:

a lenticular lens sheet having a lenticular lens array at one side and a flat face on the other side;
 an optical diffusion layer adjacent to the flat face of said lenticular lens sheet;
 an optical absorption layer adjacent to said optical diffusion layer;
 an optically bonded layer adjacent to said optical absorption layer; and
 an beam transmitting part adjacent to said optically bonded layer having flat faces on both sides, whereas a face of said optical absorption layer and a face of said optical transmitting part are optically bonded.

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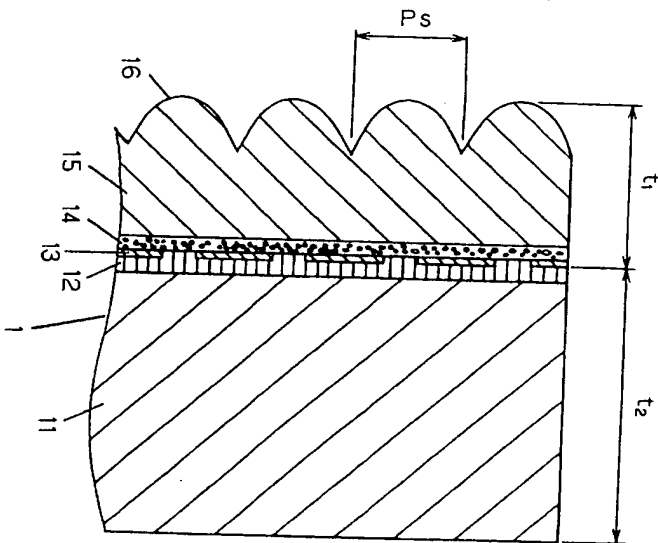


FIG. 1A.

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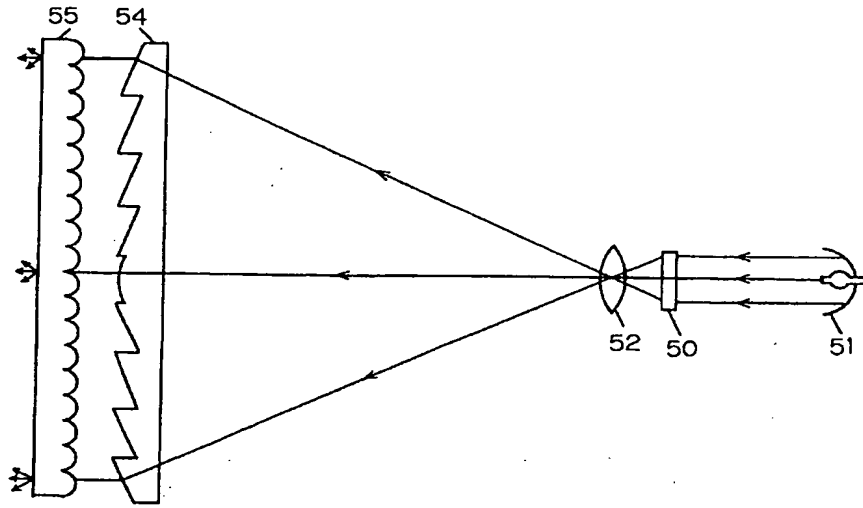


FIG. 1B

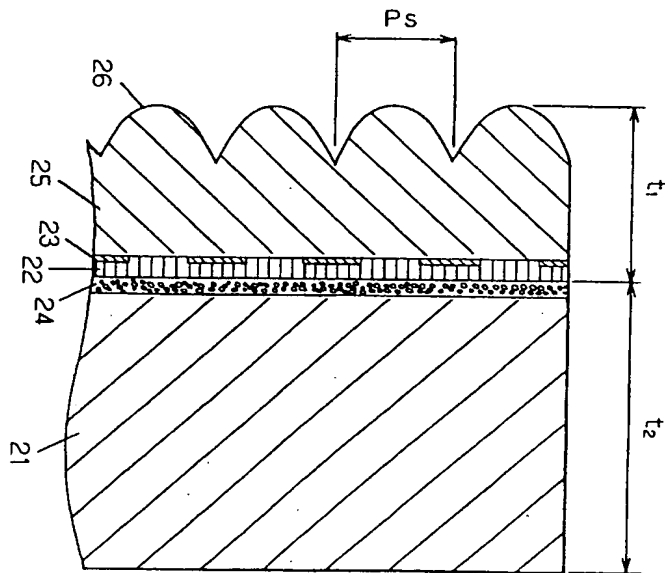


FIG. 2

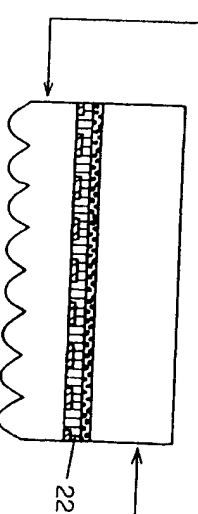
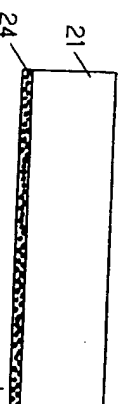
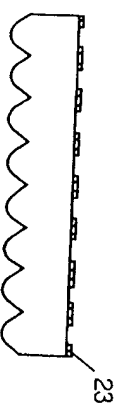
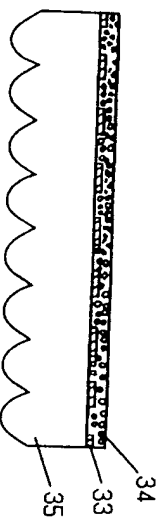


FIG. 3



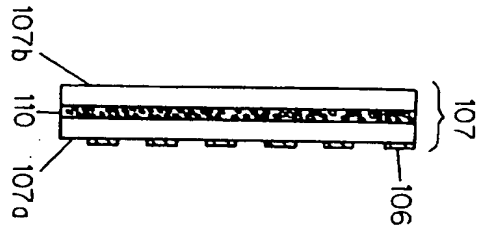


FIG. 5A
PRIOR ART

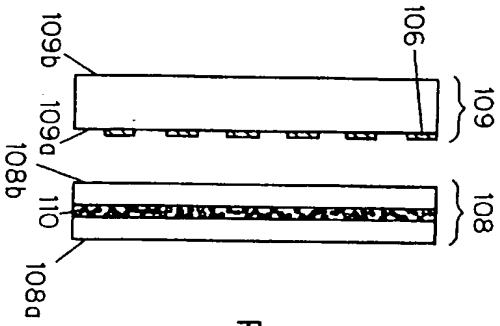


FIG. 5B
PRIOR ART

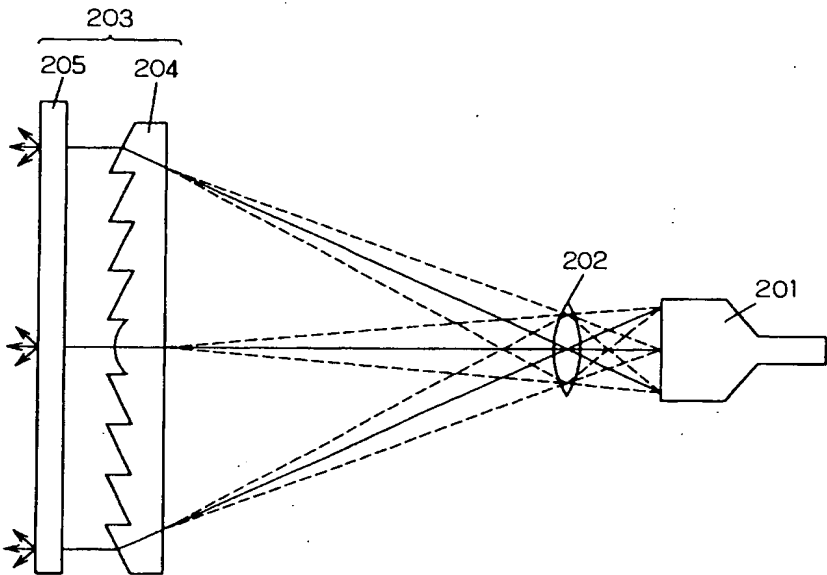


FIG. 6
PRIOR ART

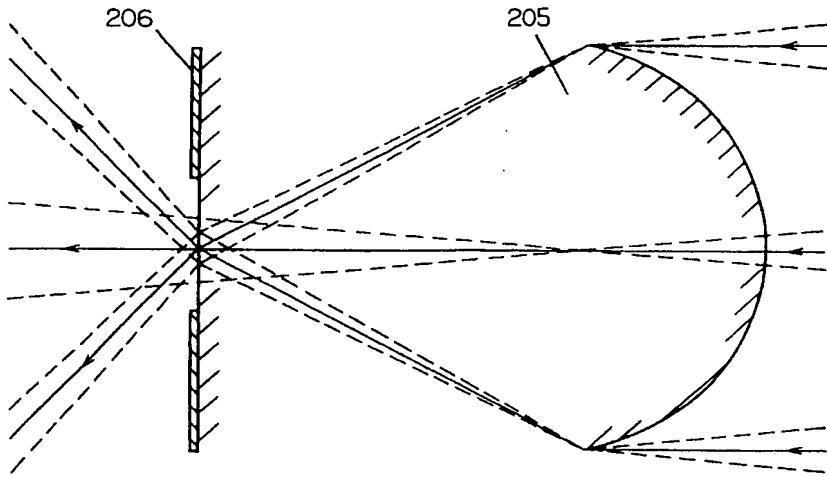


FIG. 7
PRIOR ART

Reference numerals for drawings

- 11, 21 Beam transmitting part
- 12, 22 Transparent pressure-sensitive adhesive
- 13, 23, 33 Optical absorption layer
- 14, 24, 34 Optical diffusion layer
- 15, 25, 35 Lenticular lens sheet
- 16, 26 Lenticular lens array

European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 97 11 1852

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC Class)
X	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 006, no. 005 (P-097), 13 January 1982 - 8-JP 56 132325 A (DAI NIPPON PRINTING CO LTD), 16 October 1981. Reason for citing: illustrates the lenticular structure of layer 1 (in figure 2). * Abstract *	1,3,23, 25,26,28	G03B21/62
Y	US 5 066 099 A (YOSHIDA TAKAHOKO ET AL) 19 November 1991 * column 5, line 16 - column 14, line 7 * * column 16, line 61 - column 17, line 16; figures 3-11 *	2,4,9, 14,17, 24,27	
A	EP 0 671 653 A (MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC IND CO LTD) 13 September 1995 * page 5, line 25 - page 9, line 4; figures 2,3 *	4,9,14, 17	TECHNICAL FIELD SEARCHED (IPC Class) G03B G02B
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 011, no. 091 (P-558), 23 March 1987 8 JP 61 241741 A (HITACHI LTD), 28 October 1986. * Abstract *		

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Date of search

Date of publication

Date of filing

Date of priority

Date of invention

Date of application

Date of examination

Date of grant

Date of opposition

Date of appeal

Date of revocation

Date of reinstatement

Date of withdrawal

Date of abandonment

Date of lapse

Date of expiry

Date of termination

Date of cancellation

Date of annulment

Date of restoration

Date of re-examination

BERLIN 14 October 1997

SEARCHED BY: HANITZ, M

CLASSIFICATION OF CITED DOCUMENTS

X: substantially relevant to claim above
Y: relevant to claim above, but not to the same extent
A: relevant to claim above, but not to the same extent
O: not relevant to claim above
* Abstract *

T: theory or principle underlying the invention
E: earlier patent document, but published in X
D: earlier patent document, but published in Y
L: document cited for other reasons
B: document of the same patent family, corresponding document

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

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G02B 6/00
G02F 1/1335
G02F 1/1335

(21)Application number : 08-154518

(71)Applicant : SHARP CORP

(22)Date of filing : 14.06.1996

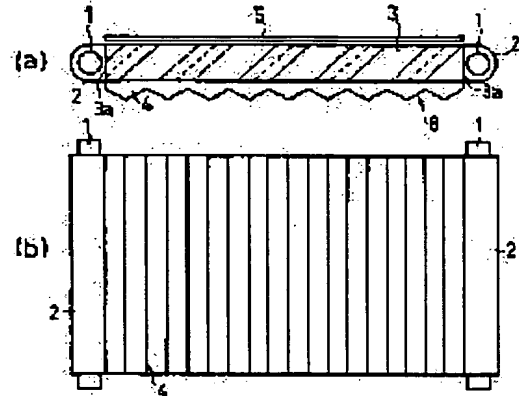
(72)Inventor : FURUSAWA YASUHIRO

(54) BACK LIGHT DEVICE

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To obtain a back light device with its superior cost effectiveness and mass-productivity capable of being a surface light source without applying a divergence reflection pattern material.

SOLUTION: A light guide body part 8 at which tubular light sources 1, 1 and reflection plates 2, 2 are mounted on both ends thereof is formed of which a light guide layer 3 for transmitting incident light from the tubular light source 1 and a triangular layer 4 with its cross-section formed in the form of saw-teeth for emitting light transmitted from the light guide layer 3. The refractive index of the light guide layer 3 is set to be the largest, and the refractive index of the triangular layer 4 is set to be changed in a direction in which the index increases as it is further removed from the tubular light source 1. The apex angle of the saw-tooth part of the triangular layer 4 is set to increase as it is further removed from the tubular light source 1 so as to strengthen directivity of light emitted from the light guide body part 8 in the front face direction of a liquid crystal panel.



LEGAL STATUS

[Date of request for examination]

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[Kind of final disposal of application other than the examiner's decision of rejection or application converted registration]

[Date of final disposal for application]

[Patent number]

[Date of registration]

[Number of appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of requesting appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of extinction of right]

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(51)Int.Cl.*		戸内照明番号		F I		技術的課題所	
F 21 V	8/00	6 01		F 21 V	8/00	6 01 B	
G 02 B	6/00	3 31		G 02 B	6/00	6 01 C	
G 02 F	1/1335	5 20		G 02 F	1/1335	5 20	
		5 30				5 30	
				審査請求	未請求	請求項の数	4 OL (全 14 頁)

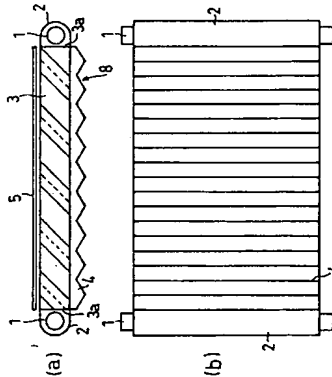
(21)出願番号	特願平8-154518	(71)出願人	00005049 シャープ株式会社 大阪府大阪市阿倍野区長池町22番22号
(22)出願日	平成8年(1996)6月14日	(72)発明者	古澤 康弘 大阪府大阪市阿倍野区長池町22番22号
		(74)代理人	井理士 原 健三 シャープ株式会社内

(54) 発明の名称 バックライト装置

(57) 要約

【課題】従来の導光体の下面に拡散反射パターン物を形成することにより面光源化し、また、プリズムシートを積層して出射光の指向性を液晶パネルの正面方向に強める構成では、量産性に劣る。量産性を向上し得る構成を提供する。

【解決手段】 両端部に管状光源1：1と反射板2・2とが取り付けられた導光体部8は、管状光源1からの入射光を伝播させる導光部3と、伝播される光を導光部3から出射させる断面鋸歯状に形成された三角層4とが一体となった透明導光体から形成されており、導光部3の屈折率が最も大きく、三角層4の屈折率は、管状光源1から離開するほど大きくなる方向に変化するよう設定され、かつ、三角層4の鋸歯部分の頂角は、導光体部8より出射する光の指向性を液晶パネルの正面方向に強めるように、管状光源1から離開するほど大きくなるよう設定されている。



【0009】その他、印刷時の墨の混入を防がなければならぬことや、導光体自体を金型成型して量産性を上げようとしても、印刷工程が別途必要になることなど、拡散反射パターン物を印刷に得る方法は、必ずしも量産性が良いとは言えない。

【0010】もう一つは、バックライト装置の発光強度の指向性を液晶パネルの正面方向に強めるために、別部材として上記したプリズムシート39のような光学シートが必要になる点である(図17参照)。光学シートと50ミクロンほどのピッチ、頂角が概ね90度の樹脂ム形状に配列したいわゆるプリズムシートがよく使われている。しかしながらこのプリズムシートはその性質上、部材コストがバックライト装置を構成する部材の中で最も高く、また、傷や汚れが発生するとそのまま異物ムラ等の問題に直結するため、その扱いには慎重な作業が必要になり、コスト、量産性の面で問題がある。

【0011】本発明は、上記課題に鑑みて成されたものであって、コスト、量産性に優れたバックライト装置を提供することを目的としている。

【0012】

【課題を解決するための手段】上記の課題を解決するために、本発明の請求項1記載のバックライト装置は、表示パネルの背面側に配され、光を伝播、反射、拡散させる面光源手段の少なくとも一端部に、線状の光源と線光源からの光を面光源手段へと反射させる反射板とが設けられたバックライト装置において、上記面光源手段は、光源からの入射光を伝播させるための第1の層と、該第1の層に積層され、積層面とは反対側の面が断面幾何形状に形成され、伝播される光を第1の層から出射するための第2の層とを一体に形成した透明導光体よりなり、上記第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく、かつ、第2の層の屈折率は、光源から離開するほど大きくなる方向に変化するよう設定されていることを特徴としている。

【0013】これによれば、透明導光体よりなる面光源手段における第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく設定されている。したがって、第1の層内では全反射現象が生じる。このとき、全反射角は、第1の層と第2の層との屈折率からスネルの法則より決定され、第1の層と第2の層の屈折率が近づくと、全反射角は小さくなる。このことは、つまり、第2の層の屈折率を光源から離開するほど大きく設定すれば、光源から離開するほど光の第2の層への入射機会を大きくすることができるとを表している。そこで、請求項1の構成では、第2の層の屈折率を、光源から離開するほど大きく、方向に変化するよう設定している。これにより、従来のような拡散反射パターン物を印刷せずとも、1つの導光体のみで均一な輝度分布を有する面光源手段を構成し得る。

(3) 特開平10-3813

【0014】本発明の請求項2記載のバックライト装置は、表示パネルの背面側に配され、光を伝播、反射、拡散させる面光源手段の少なくとも一端部に、線状の光源と線光源からの光を面光源手段へと反射させる反射板とが設けられたバックライト装置において、上記面光源手段は、光源からの入射光を伝播させるための第1の層と、該第1の層に積層され、積層面とは反対側の面が断面幾何形状に形成され、伝播される光を第1の層から出射させるための第2の層とを一体に形成した透明導光体よりなり、上記第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく、かつ、上記第1の層と第2の層との界面の第1の層の面に対する傾斜角は、表示パネルとは反対側に傾く方向を正方向とすると、光源側で最も大きく、光源から離開するほど小さくなる方向に変化するよう設定されていることを特徴としている。

【0015】これにおいても、透明導光体よりなる面光源手段における第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく設定されているので、第1の層内では全反射現象が生じる。したがって、前述の請求項1の構成では、第2の層の屈折率を変化させて、光の第2の層への入射機会を増加させるが、これにおいては、第1の層と第2の層への光の入射機会が、第1の層と第2の層との界面の傾斜角に依存することに着目し、該傾斜角を光源側で最も大きく、光源から離開するほど小さくなる方向に変化するよう設定している。これにより、光源から離開するほど第1の層から第2の層への光の入射機会が増加するので、これによっても請求項1のバックライト装置と同様に、従来のような拡散反射パターン物を印刷することなく1つの導光体のみで均一な輝度分布を有する面光源手段を構成し得る。

【0016】本発明の請求項3記載のバックライト装置は、請求項1又は2の構成において、上記面光源手段における表示パネルとは反対側の表面に、面光源手段から出射される光を該面光源手段に再入射させる反射手段が設けられていることを特徴としている。

【0017】これによれば、面光源手段の表示パネルとは反対側の表面に設けられた反射手段により、表示パネルとは反対側に射出された面光源手段内へと再入射される。したがって、光を有効に利用することができ、明るいうバックライト装置を実現できる。

【0018】上記反射手段としては、例えば、面光源手段の表面に配された鏡面反射板や、面光源手段の表面に蒸着等により積層された鏡面反射膜等の鏡面反射を用いた反射部材、或いは、面光源手段の表面に配された拡散反射板や、面光源手段の表面に蒸着等により積層された拡散反射膜等の拡散反射を用いた反射部材等が挙げられる。

【0019】本発明の請求項4記載のバックライト装置は、請求項1、2又は3の構成において、上記面光源手段における第2の層は、断面部分の頂角が光源から離開

するほど大きくなるように形成されていることを特徴としている。

【0020】これによれば、断面部分の頂角が光源から離開するほど大きくなるように形成された第2の層により、従来のように、高面で設けの難しいプリズムシートを別途設けることなく、出射光の指向性を表示パネルの正面方向に強めることが可能となる。

【0021】

【発明の実施の形態】

【実施の形態1】本発明の実施の一形態について図1ないし図6に基づいて説明すれば、以下の通りである。図1(a)は、本実施の形態のバックライト装置の断面図であり、図においては上方が液晶パネル(図示せず)側となる。図面(b)は、バックライト装置を液晶パネル側とは反対側からみた下面図である。以降の説明において、液晶パネル側を上側、液晶パネル側を下側と称する。

【0022】図1(a)(b)に示すように、このバックライト装置は2灯式であり、一体の透明な導光体よりなる導光体部(面光源手段)8の両端部に、管状光源(光源1・1が取り付けた端部)2・2が、管状光源1・1から取り付けた端部側には、さらに、これら管状光源1・1からの光を効率的に導光体部8に入射させるための反射鏡(反射板)2・2が、管状光源1・1を覆うように取り付けられている。また、導光体部8の上側には、導光体部8から出射された光を拡散する拡散シート8aが配設されている。尚、上記の管状光源1・1、反射鏡2・2は、詳細には導光体部8の後述する導光層3の両端部に取り付けられており、これらが取り付けられている端部側面3aが光入射面となる。

【0023】導光体部8は、管状光源1からの出射された光を伝播させる機能を有する導光層3(第1の層)3と、この導光層3にて伝播される光を出射させる機能を有する面が断面幾何形状に形成された三角層(第2の層)4とが一体に積層されたものである。そして、導光層3の屈折率、三角層4の屈折率、及び三角層4の断面部分の頂角は、後述のような計算機シミュレーションによって求められた値に設定されており、これにより、従来のようにに拡散反射パターン物を導光体の下面に施すことなく面光源化が可能となり、また、プリズムシートのような光学シートを必要とすることなく、導光体部8より出射する光の指向性を液晶パネルの正面方向に強めることが可能となっている。

【0024】また、上記の管状光源1には例えば冷陰極蛍光灯や熱陰極蛍光灯等を用いることができ、反射鏡2には反射率の高い白色系のPET(ポリエチレンテレフレート)フィルムや樹脂着フィルム、拡散シート5にポリカーボネイトの表面を微細に粗面処理をしたフィルムやアクリルに粗面処理したものをそれぞれ用いることができる。

(4)

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【0025】このような構成において、管状光源1・1から出射した光は、直接、或いは反射鏡2・2を介して導光層3の光入射面から入射し、導光層3を伝播すると共に三角層4にて拡散・反射されて導光層3から出射され、導光層3の上側から出射した光が、拡散シート5に拡散された後、図示しない液晶パネルを下面側から照射することとなる。

【0026】以下に、前述した計算機シミュレーションによる導光体部8における導光層3の屈折率、三角層4の屈折率、及び三角層4の断面部分の頂角の設定について説明する。

【0027】導光層3及び三角層4の各屈折率は、導光層3の入射光の入射角及び強度と、導光層3の屈折率と、三角層4の屈折率とにより導き出される。導光層3の入射光に対する導光層3の出射光の出射角 β 及び強度により決定されるため、まず、その理論式を説明する。

【0028】図2において、空気の屈折率 $n_1=1$ とし、導光層10の屈折率を n_2 、三角層11の屈折率を n_3 、入射光の導光層10への入射角を i_0 、強度を1とすれば、導光層10から出射する光の反射角 r_1 、強度 I_1 は次のようにして求まる。

【0029】導光層10の入射面10aにおいて、屈折角 r_0 、表面反射 R_0 は、

【0030】

【数1】

$$r_0 = \sin^{-1}(\sin(i_0)/n_2)$$

$$R_0 = 0.5 \left(\frac{\sin^2(i_0 - r_0)}{\sin^2(i_0 + r_0)} + \frac{\tan^2(i_0 - r_0)}{\tan^2(i_0 + r_0)} \right)$$

【0031】となる。よって、導光層10に入射した光の強度 I_1 は、

【0032】

【数2】

$$I_1 = I_0(1 - R_0)$$

【0033】となる。次に、導光層10と三角層11の界面12において、入射角 i_1 、屈折角 r_1 、表面反射 R_1 は、

【0034】

【数3】

$$i_1 = 90 - r_0$$

$$r_1 = \sin^{-1}(n_2 \sin(i_1)/n_3)$$

$$R_1 = 0.5 \left(\frac{\sin^2(i_1 - r_1)}{\sin^2(i_1 + r_1)} + \frac{\tan^2(i_1 - r_1)}{\tan^2(i_1 + r_1)} \right)$$

【0035】となる。よって、三角層11に入射した光の強度 I_2 は、

【0036】

【数4】

面反射板6bを配した場合は、三角層4を射出する光については、上述の理論式のみでは算出できないが、後面反射板6bにより三角層4に再入射してくる光を考慮して、各パラメータを最適化すればよい。

【0073】また、拡散反射板7a及び拡散反射板7bとも、拡散現象が生じるので三角層4を射出する光については、上述の理論式のみでは算出できない。しかしながら、主光線は上記と同様に考えることができるため、後は拡散光を考慮して各パラメータを最適化すればよい。

【0074】尚、このような反射手段は、上記の図8に示したバックライト装置においても、導光体部8の導光層3の下面側に設けることで、同様の効果が得られる。【0075】[実施の形態2] 本発明の他の実施の形態について図9ないし図14に基づいて説明すれば、以下の通りである。尚、説明の便宜上、前記の実施の形態1にて示した部材と同一の増減を有する部材には、同一の符号を付記し、その説明を省略する。

【0076】図9(a)は、本実施の形態のバックライト装置の断面図であり、図において上方が液晶パネル(図示せず)側となる。図9(b)は、バックライト装置を液晶パネル側とは反対側からみた下面図である。図9(a)(b)に示すように、このバックライト装置と、図1(a)(b)に示した実施の形態1のバックライト装置とは、導光体部9が違っただけで、他の部分は同一の構成を有している。

【0077】実施の形態1の導光体部8では、導光層3の屈折率が三角層4の屈折率より高く、かつ、三角層4の屈折率が導光層3の屈折率より小さい範囲で、管状光源1から離開するほど小さくなる方向に変化するように設定し、これにより、管状光源1から離開するほど、導光層3から三角層4への光の入射機会を増加させ、均一な輝度分布を有する面光源としての、これに対し、本実施の形態の導光体部9では、導光層15の屈折率が三角層16の屈折率より高く設定することは同じである。角層16の屈折率は三角層15の面に対する傾斜角が、液晶パネルとの界面の導光層15の面に対する傾斜角が、液晶パネルとは反対側に傾く方向を正方向とすると、管状光源1側で最も大きく、管状光源1から離開するほど小さくなる方向に変化するよう設定されている。これにより、導光体部8と同様に、管状光源1から離開するほど、導光層3から三角層4への光の入射機会を増加させ、均一な輝度分布を有する面光源としている。上記界面の傾斜角(以下、界面傾角と称する)は、計算機シミュレーションにより求められる。

【0078】以下に、シミュレーションによる、導光体部9における導光層15、三角層16の屈折率、界面傾角、及び三角層16の頂角の各設定について説明する。前述の実施の形態1の組合と同様に、導光層15、三角層16の屈折率、及び界面傾角は、導光層15への入射

光の入射角及び強度と、導光層15の屈折率と、三角層16の屈折率とにより導き出される入射光に対する出射光の出射角及び強度により決定されるため、その理論式について説明する。

【0079】図10に示すように、空気の屈折率 $n_1 = 1$ 、導光層20の屈折率 n_2 、三角層21の屈折率 n_3 、入射光の導光層20への入射角を i_0 、強度を1とすれば、導光層20から出射する光の出射角 r_4 、強度 I_4 は次のようになる。

【0080】まず、導光層20の光入射面20aにおいて、屈折角 r_0 、表面反射 R_0 、強度 I_1 は、上記の実施の形態1で示した【数1】、【数2】と同様である。【0081】次に、導光層20と三角層21の界面22において入射角 i_1 は、界面傾角を θ_1 とすれば、【数13】

$$i_1 = 90 + \theta_1 - r_0$$

【0083】となる。屈折角 r_1 、表面反射 R_1 、強度 I_2 、全反射角 Z_1 は、上記の実施の形態1で示した【数3】、【数4】、【数5】と同様であり、全反射角 Z_1 より大きい入射角 i_1 の光線は、図に示すbのように入射面22で全反射し、全反射角 i_1 より小さい入射角 i_1 の光線は、aのように三角層21に入射する。【0084】次に、三角層21に入射した光の入射角 i_2 は、三角層21の傾角(以下、三角層傾角と称する)を θ_2 とすれば、【数14】

$$i_2 = r_1 - \theta_2$$

【0086】となる。ここでの全反射角 Z_2 についても、上記の実施の形態1で示した【数7】と同様である。【0087】次に、再び導光層20と三角層21の界面22において入射角 i_3 は、【数15】

$$i_3 = \theta_2 - i_2$$

【0089】となる。屈折率 r_3 、表面反射 R_3 、強度 I_3 は上記の実施の形態1で示した【数8】、【数9】と同様である。そして、導光層20の上面において入射角 i_4 は、【数16】

$$i_4 = \theta_1 - r_3$$

【0091】となる。屈折角 r_4 、表面反射 R_4 、強度 I_4 、全反射角 Z_3 は、上記の実施の形態1で示した【数10】、【数11】、【数12】と同様である。【0092】以上の理論式に基づいて、導光層20に入射する光に対して、導光層20から出射する光の比率をシミュレーションによって求めると、図11に示すよう

な結果が得られた。尚、シミュレーションでは、導光層20の屈折率 $n_2 = 1.59$ 、三角層21の屈折率 $n_3 = 1.49$ とし、界面傾角を -2.4° から 2.5° に変化させた。

【0093】図11によれば、界面傾角が正方向、つまり液晶パネルより離れる方向に傾斜する角度が大きくなるほど、界面22での三角層21へ入射する光の比率が小さく、界面傾角約 1.8° 以上では入射光はすべて導光層20と三角層21の界面22において全反射し、負方向に傾斜する角度が大きくなるにつれて界面22では三角層21に入射する光の比率が上昇し、導光層20から出射する光が多くなる。

【0094】したがって、このシミュレーションの結果から、導光層20と三角層21の界面傾角を光源からの位置を間数として変化させれば、導光層20の端面に配される管状光源の位置に応じて導光層20から出射する光を任意に控えることができることになる。このことは、つまり、従来のバックライト装置で行っていた、拡散反射パターン物の占有面積比率での輝度分布の調整を、界面傾角を変えることで実現できることを意味している。

【0095】そこで、本バックライト装置の導光体部9の導光層15及び三角層16では、導光層15の屈折率を1.59とし、三角層16の屈折率を1.49とし、界面傾角は、導光層15のあらゆる位置で同じ出射光強度を得ることができると設定されている。これにより、上記導光体部9は、従来のように導光体の下面に拡散反射パターン物を印刷にて設けることなく、1つの導光体よりなる輝度分布の均一な面光源となっている。

【0096】一方、上記の理論式からわかるように、出射光の角度分布は、三角層傾角 θ_1 に依存する。三角層傾角 θ_2 は、縦断面の頂角 θ_3 の関数であり、三角層傾角 θ_2 と頂角 θ_3 とは、三角層傾角 θ_2 が大きくなるほど頂角 θ_3 が小さくなる関係にある。

【0097】そこで、三角層傾角 θ_2 をパラメータとして、出射角の角度分布をシミュレーションによって求めると、図12(a)(b)及び図13(a)(b)に示すような結果が得られた。尚、シミュレーションでは、 0° から 90° の 1° ステップの入射角 i_0 をもつ光線の集合体(それぞれの光線の強度 I_0 は1とする)を入射光として、出射光の角度分布を算出した。

【0098】 $\theta_2 = 50^\circ$ のとき、 $\theta_1 = -1.6^\circ$ 、 0° 、 1.6° の各三角層21による出射角分布は、図12(a)のようになり、その場合の出射光強度は、図9(b)のようになり、全体的に正方向(区光源側)にシフトしている。一方、 $\theta_2 = 20^\circ$ のときは図13(a)(b)のようになり、全体的に負方向(光源側)にその強度がシフトしている。

【0099】基本的には、正負両方向にバランスよく強度をもつ方がよいので、そうなるような三角層21の傾

角 θ_2 をシミュレーションによって求めると、図14(a)(b)に示すような結果が得られた。つまり、 $\theta_1 = -1.6^\circ$ の最速な三角層傾角(以下、最速三角層傾角) θ_2 は 21.9° 、 $\theta_1 = 0^\circ$ の最速三角層傾角 θ_2 は 35.5° 、 $\theta_1 = 1.6^\circ$ の最速三角層傾角 θ_2 は 50.3° であった。なお、上記のシミュレーションは一例であり、他の界面傾角 θ_1 に対して、あるいは光層20、三角層21の屈折率がかわっても同様に算出できる。

【0100】そこで、本バックライト装置の三角層16の三角層傾角 θ_2 も、上記のようなシミュレーションにより求められた、導光層15の屈折率、及び三角層16の屈折率、並びに界面傾角 θ_1 に応じた最速三角層傾角に設定されている。そして、前述したように、頂角 θ_3 は三角層傾角 θ_2 の関数であり、頂角 θ_3 に照して言い換えれば、基本的に、管状光源1から離開するほど、頂角 θ_3 が大きくなるように設定されている。これにより、従来のようにプリズムシート等の光学シートを別途設けることなく、導光体部9より出射する光の指向性が液晶パネルの正面方向に強められている。

【0101】尚、実施の形態1でも述べたが、指向性の強さをそれほど必要としないのであれば三角層16の頂角は一定としてもよい。また、この場合もかなり指向性を強めなければ拡散シート5は特に設けなくてもよい。【0102】また、本実施の形態のバックライト装置では、導光体部9の導光層15を液晶パネルと対向するように配していたが、これにおいても、実施の形態1で述べた如く、図15に示すように、導光体部9の三角層16側を、液晶パネルと対向するように配することも可能である。このときの光線の伝播原理は上記と同様なので省略するが、界面傾角 θ_1 、三角層最速傾角 θ_2 など角度に関するものは上記と異なるので、それぞれの要求に応じて最適化が必要がある。

【0103】また、本実施の形態のバックライト装置でも、例えば図16(a)に示すように、縦断面図6a、拡散反射層7aを覆覆したり、図16(b)に示すように、後面反射板6bや拡散反射板7bを配置したりすることで、導光体部9の下面側に出射する光を再び導光体部9内へと戻し、光の有効利用が可能となり、明るいまバックライト装置を実現できる。

【0104】尚、このような反射手段は、上記の図15に示したバックライト装置においても、導光体部9の導光層15の下面に設けることで、同様の効果が得られる。

【0105】

【発明の効果】以上のように、本発明の請求項1記載のバックライト装置は、面光源手段が、光源からの入射光を伝播させるための第1の層と、該第1の層に積層され、縦断面とは区対側の面が断面屈曲状に形成された、伝播される光を第1の層から出射させるための第2の層

とを一体に形成した透明導光体よりなり、上記第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく、かつ、第2の層の屈折率は、光源から離開するほど大きくなる方向に変化するよう設定されている構成である。

【0106】これにより、面光源手段を構成する第1の層と第2の層の屈折率により輝度分布を操作でき、従来のように拡散反射バターン物の形成を適正に面光源化が可能となるので、前述した印刷不良や漏れ入、導光体の成型と拡散反射バターンの形成が同一工程で行えないなどの従来の問題を解決し、量産性に優れたバックライト装置を提供できるという効果を奏する。

【0107】本発明の請求項2記載のバックライト装置は、面光源手段が、光源からの入射光を伝播させるための第1の層と、該第1の層に積層され、積層面とは反射面が断面縞状に形成された、伝播される光を第1の層から出射させるための第2の層とを一体に形成した透明導光体よりなり、上記第1の層の屈折率は第2の層の屈折率より大きく、かつ、上記第1の層と第2の層との界面の第1の層の面に対する傾斜角は、表示パネルとは反対側に傾く方向を正方向とすると、光源側で最も大きく、光源から離開するほど小さくなる方向に変化するよう設定されている構成である。

【0108】これにより、面光源手段を構成する第1の層と第2の層の屈折率と、界面傾角により輝度分布を操作でき、従来のように拡散反射バターン物を施すことなく面光源化が可能となるので、前述した印刷不良や漏れ入、導光体の成型と拡散反射バターン物の形成とが同一工程で行えないなどの従来の問題を解決し、量産性に優れたバックライト装置を提供できるという効果を奏する。

【0109】本発明の請求項3記載のバックライト装置は、請求項1又は2の構成において、上記面光源手段における表示パネルとは反対側の表面に、面光源手段から出射される光を該面光源手段に再入射させる反射手段が設けられている構成である。

【0110】これにより、面光源手段の表示パネルとは反対側に出射される光を面光源手段へと再入射させて、光を有効に利用することができるので、請求項1又は2の構成による効果に加えて、明るいバックライト装置を形成できるという効果も奏する。

【0111】本発明の請求項4記載のバックライト装置は、請求項1、2又は3の構成において、上記面光源手段における第2の層は、縞面部分の厚みが光源から離開するほど大きくなるように形成されている構成である。

【0112】これにより、従来のように、高価で扱いの難しい光学シートを別途設けることなく、出射光の指向性を表示パネルの正面方向に強めることができるので、請求項1、2又は3の構成よりもさらに少ない構成部材で出射光の指向性まで制御して、より量産性の優れたバックライト装置を提供できるという効果を奏する。

【図面の簡単な説明】
【図1】本発明の一実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示すもので、(a)が断面図、(b)はその下面図である。

【図2】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体の導光体部における光線追跡の原理図である。
【図3】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光強度比のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図4】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光角度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。
【図5】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光強度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図6】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光角度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図7】本発明の他の実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示す断面図である。

【図8】(a)(b)それぞれ、本発明の他の実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示す断面図である。

【図9】本発明の他の実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示すもので、(a)が断面図、(b)はその下面図である。

【図10】上記バックライト装置に搭載されると同タイプの導光体部における光線追跡の原理図である。

【図11】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光強度比のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図12】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光角度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図13】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光強度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図14】上記バックライト装置に搭載される導光体部の設計に用いる、出射光角度分布のシミュレーション結果を示す説明図である。

【図15】本発明の他の実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示す断面図である。

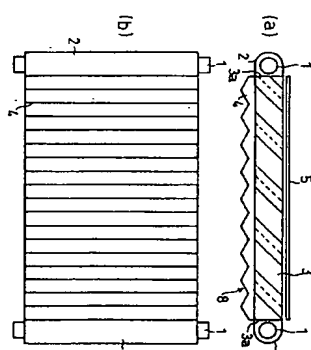
【図16】(a)(b)それぞれ、本発明の他の実施形態のバックライト装置の構成を示す断面図である。

【図17】(a)は従来の技術の2灯方式バックライト装置の下面図で、(b)はその断面図である。

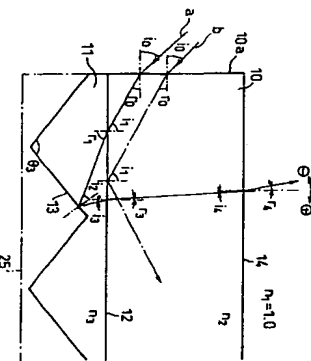
【図18】従来の技術の2灯方式バックライト装置のドット形状による拡散反射バターン物を示す説明図である。【符号の説明】

- 1 管状光源
- 2 反射鏡

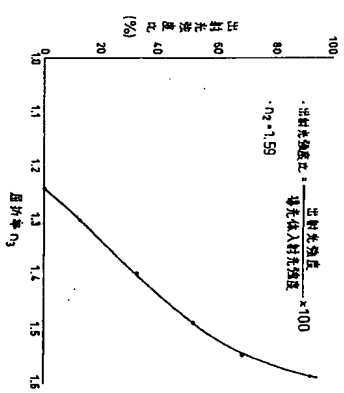
- 3 導光層 (第1の層)
- 4 三角層 (第2の層)
- 5 拡散シート
- 6a 縞面反射膜 (反射手段)
- 6b 縞面反射板 (反射手段)
- 7a 拡散反射層 (反射手段)
- 7b 拡散反射板 (反射手段)
- 8 導光体部 (面光源手段)
- 9 導光体部 (面光源手段)
- 15 導光層 (第1の層)
- 16 三角層 (第2の層)



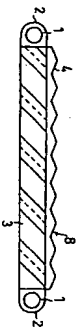
【図1】



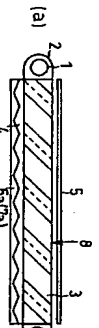
【図2】



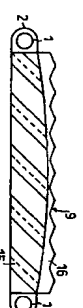
【図3】



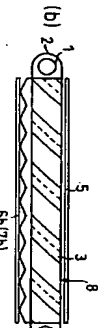
【図7】



【図8】



【図15】

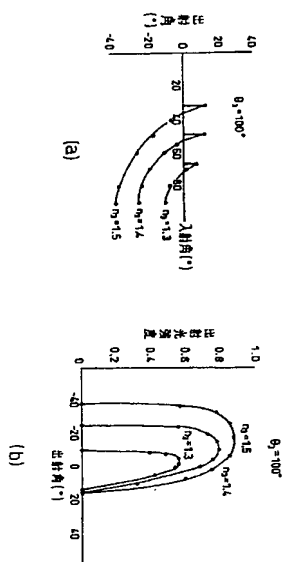


5b(17b)

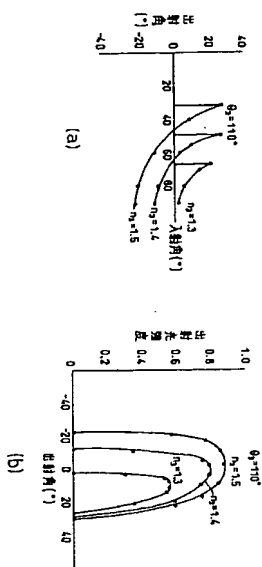
(11)

特開平10-3813

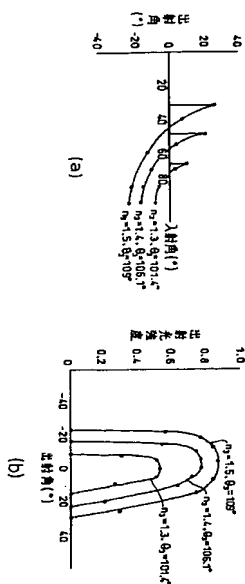
【図4】



【図5】



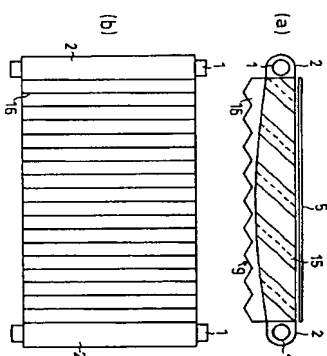
【図6】



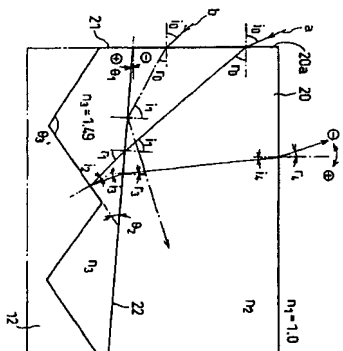
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特開平10-3813

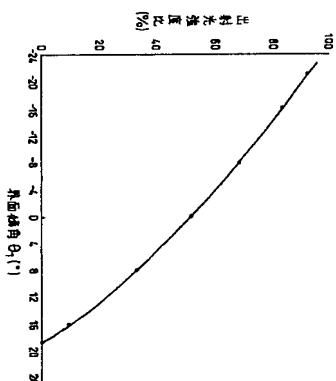
【図9】



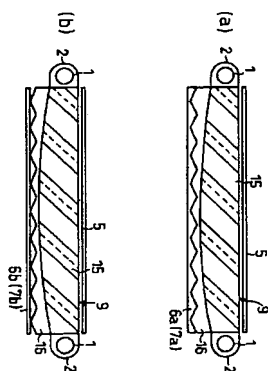
【図10】



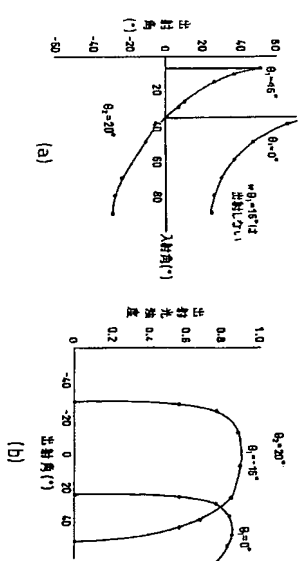
【図11】



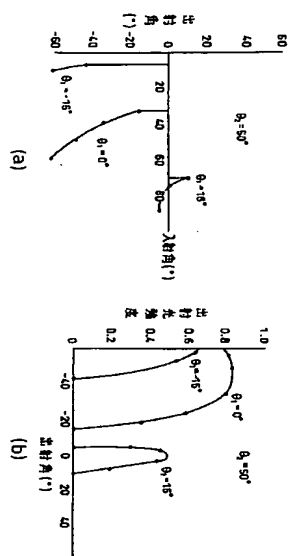
【図16】



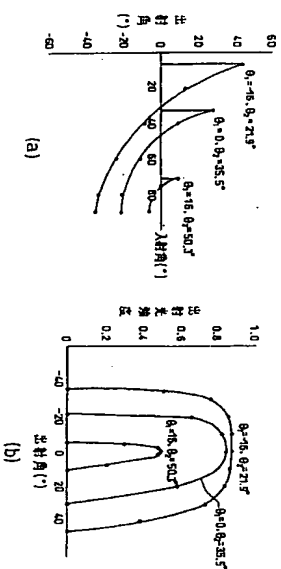
【図12】



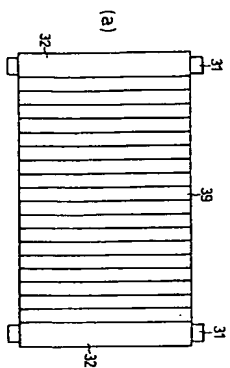
【図13】



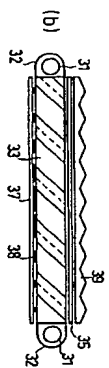
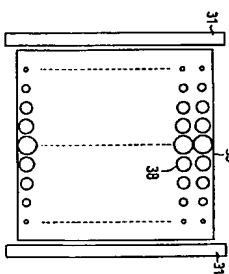
【図14】



【図17】



【図18】



【手続補正書】

【提出日】平成8年7月25日

【手続補正1】

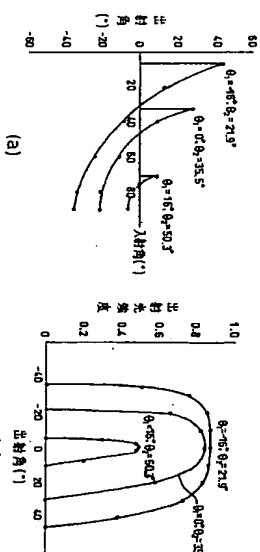
【補正対象書類名】明細書

【補正対象項目名】0098

【補正方法】変更

【補正内容】

【0098】 $\theta_1 = 2.0^\circ$ のとき、 $\theta_1 = -1.6^\circ$ 、 0° 、 1.6° の各三角図21による出射角分布は、図12 (a) のようになり、その場合の出射光強度は、同図 (b) に示すように、全体的に正方向 (反光源側) にシ



フトしている。一方、 $\theta_1 = 50^\circ$ のときは図13 (a) (b) のようになり、全体的に負方向 (光源側) にその強度がシフトしている。

【手続補正2】

【補正対象書類名】図面

【補正対象項目名】図14

【補正方法】変更

【補正内容】

【図14】

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